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DIRECTORATE OF  
INTELLIGENCE

# *WEEKLY SUMMARY*

## *Special Report*

*Separate Development in South Africa: The Bantustans*

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## SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE BANTUSTANS

*We can only safeguard the white man's control over our country if we move in the direction of separation—separation in the political sphere at any rate.*

The late Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd, 1959

Since coming to power in 1948 the Afrikaner-dominated National Party has had as its primary goal the implementation of its policy of separation of the races (apartheid). In the last decade, the keystone of that policy has become the bantustans, the African tribal homelands. In theory, these territories will eventually become self-governing, independent states, and Prime Minister Vorster has said that his government hopes to grant "independence" to one or two bantustans in the next few years. The chances, however, that any of the homelands will ever become self-supporting and really free of dependence on white-ruled South Africa are almost nonexistent.

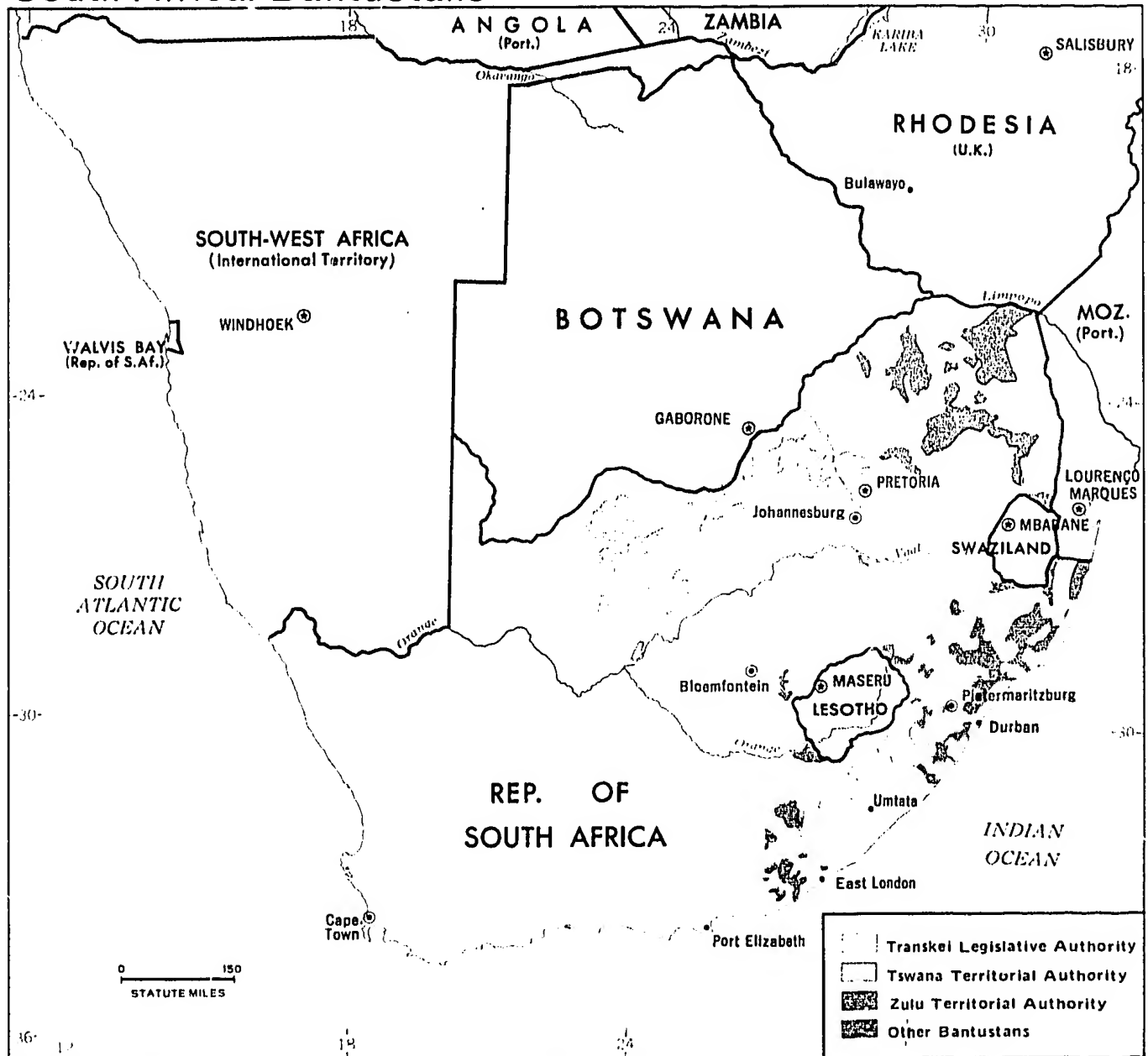
Granting nominal independence soon, however, could have certain advantages for Pretoria. It would probably reassure Afrikaner supporters of the government that it is moving ahead—albeit slowly—with separate development. It could also further the Vorster government's efforts to improve relations with a select number of black-ruled states and thus sow dissension among African leaders who are already at odds with each other over how best to deal with South Africa.

The government hopes the bantustans will eventually become the homeland of most of South Africa's blacks, and it is attempting to remove the Africans from white-designated areas by converting the black urban labor force, on which the economy is dependent, into a migratory one. The problems confronting the government in accomplishing this, however, are monumental, and whether the Nationalists will succeed in turning present planning into practice is clouded with uncertainty.

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## South Africa: Bantustans



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*Background*

*There must be a white South Africa and a black South Africa politically divided but peacefully and cooperatively coexistent.*

S. Pienaar, prominent Afrikaner journalist

*Apartheid, though cruel in practice, is idealistic in theory.*

Alan Paton, author of *Cry, the Beloved Country*

It is impossible to travel in South Africa today without noticing the distinctions that are made between the races. Separate facilities for whites and "non-whites" are almost everywhere: at airports, post offices, beaches, graveyards, even in those areas set aside for the African. In Umtata, the capital of the Transkei, for example, there are hotels where the chief minister of the territorial government, an African, cannot stay. South African law excludes the African from national political affairs and also dictates where he may live and what kind of job he may hold.

Although most of South Africa's 3.8 million English- and Afrikaans-speaking whites consider white minority rule essential and social segregation desirable, only the ruling National Party, the political voice of most Afrikaners, espouses the apartheid ideology of complete racial separation. Afrikaners' racial fears and sense of superiority are deeply rooted in their history as a frontier people among hostile African tribes and in their 17th century Calvinist religion with its doctrine of the elect. For them, regimentation of blacks has always been a matter of survival, and since coming to power in 1948 the Nationalist government has done its utmost to shore up, formalize, and extend the country's traditional system of racial discrimination.

In the last ten years or so the focus of the government's racial policies has become the bantustan, the Africans' tribal homeland. Afrikaner

political leaders and intellectuals contend, with some justification, that South Africa is not one but several different "nations" as incapable of forming a single political and social unit as, say, India and Pakistan. In order for the white man (as well as the non-white) to maintain his own identity and keep what he believes is rightfully his, it is argued that each "nation" should be allowed to develop in its own way with its "own institutions, attitudes, and values." Until such time as this can be brought about, however, discrimination, or what has come to be known as "petty apartheid," will remain in force.

By definition tribes are considered nations, and the government has gone to some lengths to bolster the authority of traditional tribal chiefs in African-designated reserves (bantustans) and to revive tribal ties among Africans in urban areas. Tribal dialects have become the language of instruction in African schools, and the government has established separate universities for some tribal groups. The government-owned South African Broadcasting Corporation also has regular programming in the tribal languages. In urban areas, officials have begun to divide Africans residentially along tribal lines. Above all, the government has promoted its bantustan program as the answer to South Africa's troubling racial problems.

Although the idea of separate homelands for blacks is a logical outgrowth of apartheid, it is also a response to foreign critics who have branded South Africa's racial policies as harsh and totally oppressive. If current government plans are carried out, all Africans eventually will become citizens of these homelands, which will be given the formal trappings of independent states. In theory, Africans would then be free of white political control, and whites would retain exclusive rights in their part of the country where blacks would be treated as foreign migrant workers. What the relationship between these "independent" bantustans and white South Africa would be is unclear, although government leaders sometimes speak of a "commonwealth" of South Africa.

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To those, therefore, who criticize the South African Government for withholding political rights from the Africans, Pretoria holds up the panacea of a future multiracial, but racially separated, union of South Africa. To the opponents of apartheid, however, separate development is at best a utopian, self-deluding policy, and at worst (and more likely) an attempt to pull the wool over the eyes of the outside world and to provide a moral basis at home for continued white supremacy rule. They are deeply skeptical of the government's claim that "petty apartheid" is only transitory and that the bantustans will ever achieve real independence.

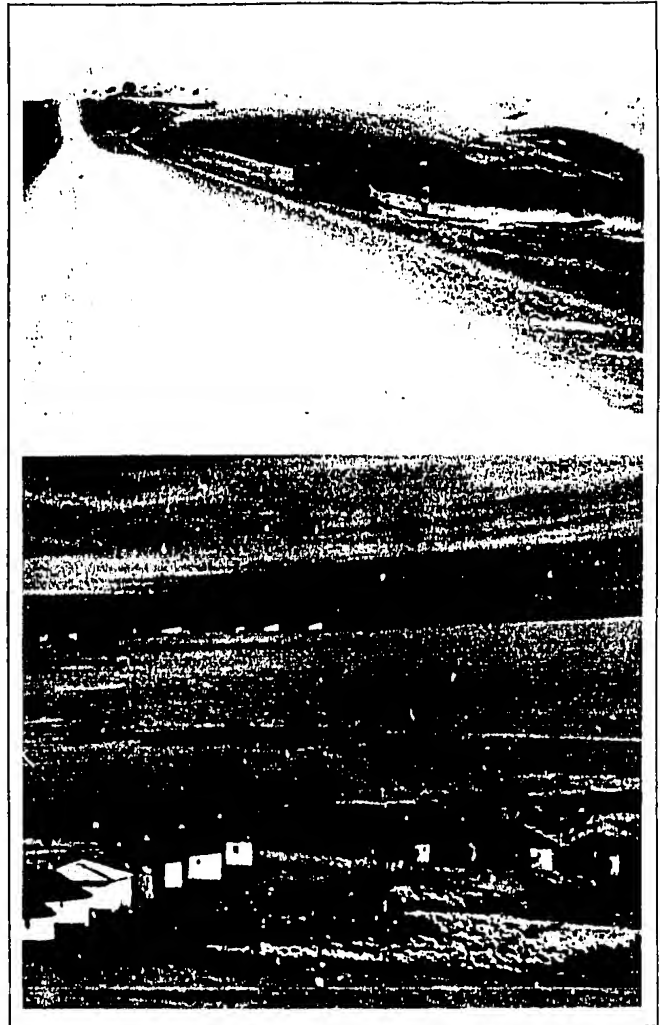
Some Afrikaner intellectuals are also highly critical of the bantustan program, not because they disagree with it but because they want the government to do more to make it a reality. In fact, the government's efforts have often been compared unfavorably to the plans to industrialize the reserves proposed in the mid-50s by one of its own special study groups—the Tomlinson Commission. But the late Prime Minister Verwoerd, whom many Afrikaners look upon as the prophet of apartheid, rejected this course. As a result, the government has concentrated largely on the more dramatic and less expensive effort of political development.

*Inside the Bantustans*

*They are valleys of old men and old women, of mothers and children. The men are away, the young men and the girls are away. The soil cannot keep them any more.*

*Cry, the Beloved Country*

Nearly half of South Africa's 15 million blacks now live in the eight reserves set aside for them. These homelands make up less than 12 percent of the land area of South Africa, and by one recent official count consist of 276 bits and pieces of territory scattered mostly over the east-



Typical scenes in the Bantustans

ern half of the country. Although the government is committed to buying over 5,000 more square miles of land consigned to the reserves under the 1936 Bantu Trust and Land Act, it does not plan to consolidate many, if any, of the bantustans completely. This would entail the removal of too many white farmers, not to mention some white towns and major cities.

Over the last decade Pretoria has pumped roughly \$400 million into the homelands for land

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purchases, township planning, housing, and other social services, as well as for agriculture. Annually that amounts to less than two percent of the government's expenditures. Although agricultural development has been given priority, officials have had to combat not only chronic drought conditions that afflict much of the country but the African peasant's traditional indifference to farming and his strong resistance to change as well. Because of African neglect as well as overpopulation, soil erosion and cattle overstocking are still widespread, and food shortages are frequent.

Many young blacks in the reserves, moreover, prefer to seek industrial jobs rather than farm because as wage earners they have at least some opportunity to ease their harsh living conditions. Industrial development in the reserves, however, is practically nonexistent. Since 1961 only 35 government-backed factories have been built, employing a total of 945 Africans. In contrast, over a million and a half blacks now work as migrant laborers in the white-controlled economy, and an estimated 35,000 additional Africans from the reserves join the labor market each year.

Officials claim that there are just not enough experienced African businessmen and skilled laborers in the bantustans yet to make industrial development feasible. Although true, this is at least partly the result of the government's own apartheid labor laws that exclude Africans from holding managerial and most skilled jobs. Until recently, moreover, white corporate business interests were not allowed to operate in the reserves under any conditions. Now this restriction has been modified, but because of the lack of adequate water, electrical power, housing, roads, and rail facilities, few companies have shown any interest in investing in these remote areas.

In sharp contrast with its economic program, Pretoria has put enormous effort, particularly in the last three years, into erecting administrative structures in the homelands ranging from local tribal to territorial authorities. Since 1968, seven

of the reserves have acquired territorial status—theoretically the penultimate step before full independence—and two of them, Tswanaland and Northern Sotho, are expected to gain limited parliamentary self-government within the next year or so. The South African parliament will probably also bestow homeland citizenship on blacks this year.

All of this is in preparation for at least some form of eventual political autonomy for the homelands. Prime Minister Vorster stated late last year that his government hopes to grant "independence" to one or two bantustans in the next few years. If so, the Transkei will probably be the first. Unlike the other homelands it consists virtually of one large solid block of land. The territory also has a long history of local self-government dating back to the 1890s, and as the oldest bantustan it has had most of the trappings of a modern state since 1963. It boasts a constitution, a cabinet, a partially elected legislative assembly, and a civil service (largely black), as well as a flag, an anthem, and an official language. The Transkei's economy, however, is still based primarily on subsistence agriculture and migrant labor, and its government is almost entirely dependent on Pretoria for regular financial support and development funds. Consequently, the development of the Transkei into a self-supporting independent state is at best a very distant goal.

Granting nominal independence soon, however, could have certain advantages for Pretoria. It would probably reassure most Afrikaners that the government is moving ahead with separate development. Moreover, for some time Prime Minister Vorster has been trying to improve his government's relations with a select number of black-ruled African states, particularly Malawi, (the only African state with which it has diplomatic relations) the Ivory Coast, Gabon, and the Malagasy Republic.

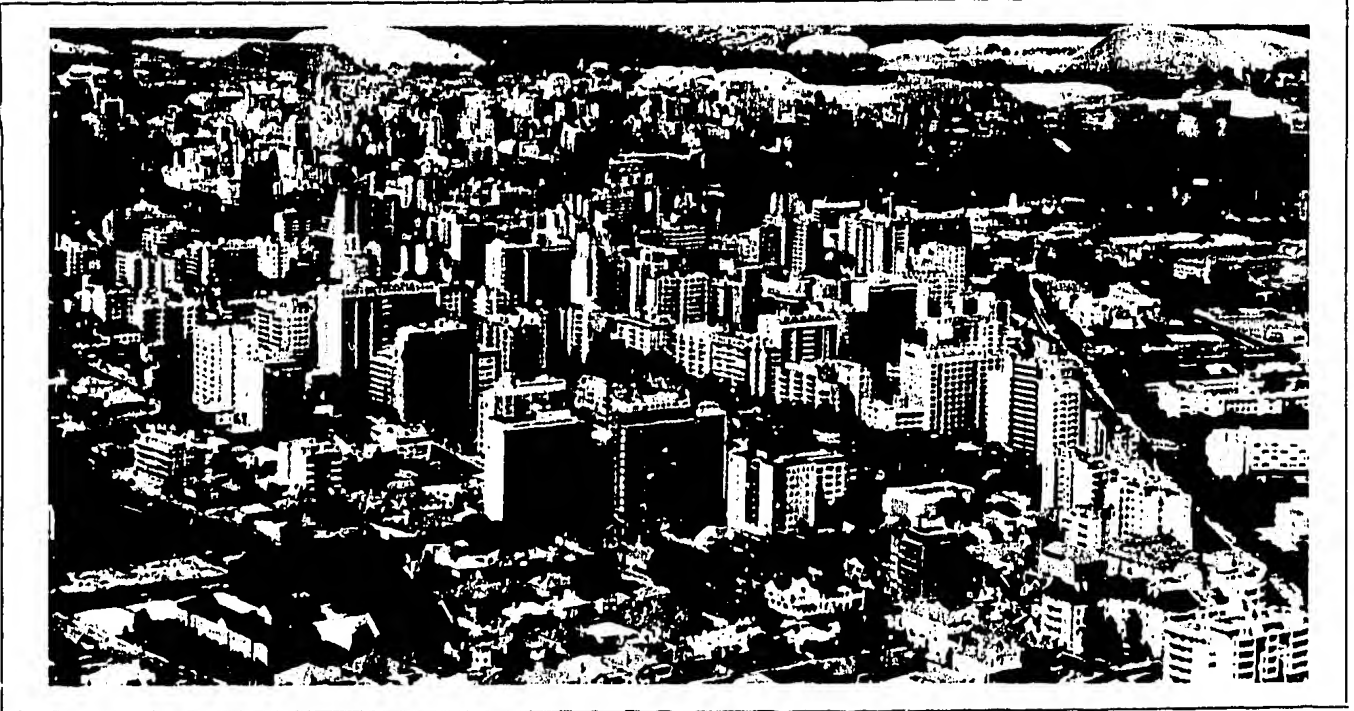
Last year Pretoria made some progress in this direction. In November, President Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast made a public

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Literally built atop some of the richest gold mines in the world, Johannesburg is South Africa's largest city. Today, its population is almost 60 percent black.



appeal for a "dialogue" between black- and white-ruled African states, thus breaking the surface unity of black African opposition to South Africa. That same month, Tananarive accepted \$6.5 million in economic aid from Pretoria. A gesture toward his own blacks, some observers believe, would help further Vorster's "outward looking policy" and drive the opening wedge even deeper between the moderate and more militant African states.

South Africa could, of course, be creating troublesome neighbors within its own borders. Not all of the bantustan leaders are subservient to Pretoria's will. Chief Buthelezi of Zululand, an outspoken critic of apartheid, recently took the government to task for not living up to its obligation to provide new land to Zulus ejected from farm land allotted to whites. Many of the other tribal chiefs, however, have a vested interest in the present system and are almost completely submissive to the wishes of Pretoria. Even

Buthelezi is keenly aware of the limit to which he can go in challenging the government.

*Rural Solution to an Urban Problem*

*The flow of Bantu (African) labor must be reduced, then it must be stopped, and then it must be turned back.*

The Deputy Minister of Bantu Administration to a group of South African businessmen

Sixteen years ago the Tomlinson Commission recommended that the government industrialize the reserves so that they could support the bulk of South Africa's black population by the end of this century. This approach, intended to attract blacks back to the homelands from white areas, was rejected as politically and economically impractical. The white taxpayer would never have willingly paid the costs; many in fact are unhappy

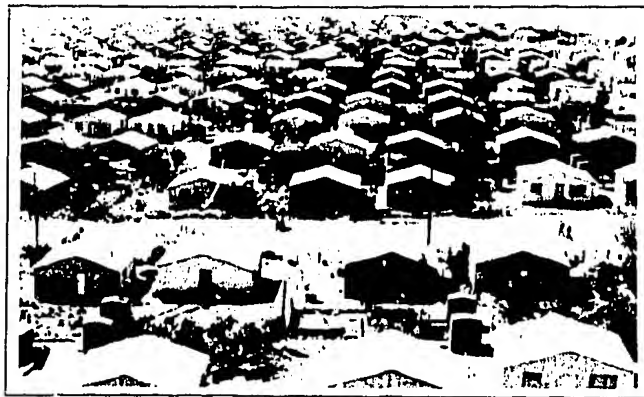
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even about the relatively small amount the government presently spends on the bantustans. To stem the influx of blacks into the white areas, therefore, Pretoria began to apply tighter restrictions, but the black migration continued. Today most of South Africa's major cities have black majorities; in all, Africans outnumber whites in white areas by better than two to one.

Although the government would like to remove all blacks from white areas, it has recognized that it cannot. The white-run economy is too dependent on black labor. Moreover, for some time South Africa's economy has been suffering from an acute shortage of skilled labor. Last September the government's manpower survey indicated there was a total shortage of nearly 70,000 workers in all sectors, although industrial spokesmen claimed that there were 63,000 vacancies in industry alone. In any case, the government and white-controlled labor unions have agreed in some cases to "regrade" semiskilled and skilled jobs to permit Africans to hold them, although at a reduced wage. The government has also granted widespread exemptions to employers so that they can "temporarily" employ blacks in positions still legally relegated to whites.

Pretoria, however, considers only about half of the almost eight million blacks who live in white areas as "economically productive units." The others include workers' dependents, widows, and the aged, as well as black businessmen and professionals. The government plans to uproot these people and move them to the homelands, while converting the rest of the African urban population into a migratory labor force.

To accomplish its goal, the government has adopted a variety of tactics. One has been to impose even more stringent restrictions on the movement of blacks from the homelands to white, particularly urban, areas. Since 1967, every African male in the reserves has been required by law to register at a government labor bureau if he wishes outside work. Under the terms of his labor contract, he can spend in most cases no more



An African township near Johannesburg

than 11 months of the year in a white area. Then he must return home and re-register if he wants to work in a white area again.

The government has also by tax concessions and other incentives encouraged about 200 South African companies to move their factories closer to the bantustans or to expand their operations in border areas. Africans working in these plants are expected to leave their dependents in the reserves. This so-called "border industry program," however, has been only modestly successful because private industry has been unenthusiastic about moving to these areas except where there are already well-established industrial complexes and a developed infrastructure, such as in Rosslyn and Pietermaritzburg.



"Bachelors' " hostel

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To speed up this "decentralization" of industry, therefore, the government has apparently decided to apply the stick as well as the carrot. Under the 1967 Physical Planning Act, it now has the power to prevent industries from building new factories or expanding old ones in urban areas if they require more black labor. Although Pretoria has not yet borne down heavily on white corporate businesses, it has put them on notice that more and more of their plants will have to go to border areas in the future.

At the same time the government has also begun to bear down more heavily on the black urban population. It has closed down some old-age homes for Africans, as well as clinics and hospitals, trade schools, juvenile reformatories, and other social services, and has moved these institutions to the reserves. It has also deliberately allowed urban African schools to run down and has encouraged parents to send their children to schools in the homelands. In already overcrowded African townships, the government has stopped building new family accommodations in favor of so-called "bachelors' quarters" for migrant workers, and it has ruled that Africans can no longer build their own homes in urban areas. As for those who already have homes, they will no longer be allowed to will them to their heirs or sell them to anyone but the government.

#### Conclusion

*...there comes to the visitor a sudden vision of the government, like Sisyphus, striving forever to push uphill a stone that is forever toppling back upon it.*

*There is no end to such a process, and no permanent solution save surrender--and that is something the whites will never do. So the heart is saddened and the mind, ultimately, retreats: the problem is too big.*

Allen Drury, *A Very Strange Society*

That the government is determined to pursue its bantustan policy is clear. Thus, one or perhaps two homelands will probably gain independence of a sort in the next few years instead of in decades, as has long been presumed by many political observers and Afrikaners as well. As long as these areas remain economically dependent on white South Africa, however, independence will mean little more than a paper transfer of sovereignty. No matter how sincerely many government officials believe that the bantustans are the answer to South Africa's racial problems, and many do, the homelands will remain no more than large labor pools for the white economy to draw on for the foreseeable future.

What is uncertain is whether the government can really succeed in turning its present plans into reality. Unless the present trend is radically altered, there will be almost 20 million blacks in white areas by the end of this century. By the government's own calculations, it must provide 44,000 jobs a year inside and near the bantustans in order to take care of all newcomers into the labor market from the homelands. To provide for this number, however, and to reduce the African urban population by five percent a year, one prominent South African economist estimated in 1968 that Pretoria would have to create approximately 181,000 new jobs annually in agriculture, commerce, and industry. During the last decade, the government and industry provided only about 160,000 jobs in total.

In the years ahead the South African economy will also suffer from a growing shortage of skilled labor. Although the government is encouraging white immigration to fill the gap, more Africans will probably have to be trained for skilled positions, particularly in border industries. Most of the African work force now is made up of illiterate and unskilled peasants. What will happen as more Africans become literate and more highly skilled is difficult to predict. They almost certainly will begin over time to expect

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their own governments inside the bantustans to do more to improve their lot in South Africa. These are aspects of the separate development policy that haunt many government leaders and

many other whites as well. Nevertheless, the Vorster government is determined to follow this course because it sees no alternative

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